

**Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission  
Meeting Minutes for December 17, 2014  
Sartell City Hall**

**Approved 1/28/15**

**Members Present:** Rita Albrecht; Rick Anderson; Bill Bruins; Mike Hulett; Al Lieffort; Marc Mattice; Keith Nelson; Bryan Pike; Anita Rasmussen; Tom Ryan; Tom Schmitz; Barry Wendorf; LuAnn Wilcox

**1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Al Lieffort**

**2. Motion** by Pike, second by Nelson: Approve the minutes of November 26, 2014. **Carried.**

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion** by Albrecht, second by Schmitz: Approve the agenda as written. **Carried.**

**4. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance**

Kathy Schoenbauer, Schoenbauer Consulting LLC  
Joe Czapiewski, JFC Strategic Services (serving the commission as System Plan Coordinator)

**5. Unfinished Business**

**5.1 - Communication Plan**

Members continued the discussion regarding the communication plan. Consideration is being given to using consultant services to implement the plan. Al discussed improving efficiency of communication and registering a domain name with Houston Engineering. Joe researched some options and presented an *Electronic Communications Proposal* with the goal of establishing an integrated web presence for the commission. Members discussed possible domain names, specific communication needs, and web page format.

**5.2 - System Plan Report for January 15, 2015**

Members reviewed the revised draft submitted by Schoenbauer Consulting and requested some minor additional changes and emphases. It was agreed that the document should include an executive summary, illustrate the disciplined processes established by the commission, highlight commission initiatives to develop statewide system plans for mountain biking and motorized recreation in coordination with the DNR, and emphasize the importance of hiring/contracting an Executive Director.

**Motion** by Mattice, second by Rasmussen: Adopt the *System Plan Report* with the advised changes and allow the Chair to approve the final report for submission to the Legislature. **Carried.**

**5.3 - Information Management System**

Kathy presented a template for a web based application system for regional designation and grant funding with integrated park/trail inventory, identification, amenities, and map location. The concept was developed in consultation with Houston Engineering and was patterned after the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council model. It will be designed to facilitate system planning, clarify and streamline processes, make information easily accessible, and track

projects/proposals along the idea to fulfillment continuum. Members agreed that the system needs to be in place for the spring 2015 funding cycle.

**Motion** by Nelson, second by Tom S.: Authorize the Chair to negotiate a contract with Houston Engineering for up to \$20,000 to design a web based information management system.

**Motion carried.**

## 6. New Business

### 6.1 - Review of ETeam issue 5, 6, and 7

#5 and #7 - Applications for regional designation of trails that are, or should be, part of a state or national system were not evaluated.

Members discussed jurisdictional issues related to developing trail segments that connect portions of existing state trails and/or provide access to state trails from population centers. The commission concluded that coordination with the DNR and MN DOT, and legislation that enables integration of funding streams, is needed in order to determine what will be built by which agency. The commission will assume a lead role in facilitating an intergovernmental partnership as consistent with its statutory mandate. Initial conversations will focus on trails that clearly involve all three agencies: Glacial Lakes Trail; Heartland Trail; Soo Line Trail; Minnesota River Trail.

**Motion** by Nelson, second by Hulett: Direct the Chair to invite representatives from the DNR and MN DOT to meet and dialogue about partnering for trail development. **Motion carried.**

#6 - The ETeam stated that some disparate applications were received for portions of the same trail system and recommended cooperation among jurisdictions to coordinate a cohesive plan and submit a single, joint application.

Considerations in this regard include historical contexts of the use of Legacy funds, project proposals initiated by user group associations, trails that traverse private property, and some that traverse National Forest lands. Additionally, there is no established criteria for evaluating unpaved, hand-built trails, or proposals to extend state trails beyond their designated terminus. Members discussed the Superior Hiking Trail, the North Country Trail, and the Mississippi River Trail as logistical examples.

*Keith suggested that the commission engage with the National Forest Service, especially in District 1, and have a presence at their quarterly meetings. He offered to initiate that relationship and bring information to the January meeting.*

### 6.2 - LAC (Legacy Advisory Committee) Report

Mike reported that he attended the LAC meeting on December 11 in Al's absence. He said they had circulated a "benchmark questionnaire" to the DNR and Metropolitan Council that solicited opinions about priorities, progress, and accomplishments relative to the Strategic Directions (aka four pillars) of the 25-year Legacy Plan. They are working to develop metrics for a more objective, quantifiable instrument. The goal is to determine what data is needed and how it is collected, and standardize the report format, so as to be accountable to the 25-year plan. They are advising the legislature to support the 40-40-20 appropriation of Legacy

funds to DNR, Metro, and GMRPTC respectively, because "metrics are not in place to defend any change in the formula."

LAC members asked the GMRPTC commissioners how the commission is addressing "Connect people to the outdoors." LuAnn reported that the commission has discussed that Strategic Direction, but no decisions have been made as to specific operational strategies. *LAC members advised that the commission make this a priority and integrate "non-capital spending" initiatives into its first funding cycle.*

### **6.3 - Mission Statement**

LuAnn reported that members submitted seven draft mission statements and five vision statements, and that four members had voted on them. Tom R suggested three options on how the commission could proceed, from which members opted to cull key words and concepts from the statements that were submitted, and combine them into one draft for further discussion. Some members questioned the need for a mission statement, arguing that the legislative mandate is the mission.

**Motion** by Schmitz, second by Pike: Explore both options (using either an aggregate statement or extracting the statutory language) for further discussion at the January meeting, with the intention of reaching consensus on the matter no later than February.

**Motion carried.**

## **7. Consent Agenda**

Rita reviewed the bills and claims as follows:

- JFC Strategic Services	3,936.84
- ETeam expenses	1,401.52
- Commissioners expenses	2,387.43
- DPC expenses	56.50

**Motion** by Albrecht, second by Nelson: Approve the consent agenda in the amount of \$7,782.29

**Motion carried.**

## **8. Items from members**

Tom S. asked that the regular meeting day be changed. Al agreed to discuss it at the January meeting.

Bill suggested that commission publications be modeled after Fairfax County, Virginia brochures and pamphlets, which he found to be exemplary. Al agreed, and said he had discussed You Tube "how to" video links with Houston Engineering, per Fairfax example.

**Motion** by Tom R., second by Nelson: A plaque shall be awarded to outgoing commissioners in recognition of and appreciation for their service. **Motion carried.**

*Mike Hulett will be responsible for ordering the plaques.*

Bryan asked if the DPCs will reconvene in February. Al said yes, but that the DPC operating guidelines need to be clarified and revised. *He asked that members review them in preparation for the January meeting.* Joe said that another DPC meeting will be held later in the spring or early summer with an open house style format.

LuAnn called attention to the rollout of DNR press releases and online information pertaining to "Fat Biking."

**The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2015.**

**Motion** to adjourn was made by Nelson, second by Bruins. **Motion carried.**

\*All motions are carried unanimously unless otherwise noted. Motions which are not unanimous are recorded in the Vote Tally Journal.